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MedCenter Extra

BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER, BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS OF MEDICINE, PUBLIC HEALTH AND DENTAL MEDICINE

October 20, 2000

New BMC Signs Show the Way *Some buildings change names*

New internal signs have been installed in the buildings throughout BMC to help patients, visitors and employees. The signs employ a system of simple graphics and colors to help guide employees and visitors to their destinations with relative ease and little confusion. With numerous buildings throughout the campus, the need for such a system has become increasingly apparent in recent years.

"We are dedicated to building a signage system around a philosophy of giving enough information at any one time to guide someone to the next logical point. Last summer we introduced new outdoor signs to help guide visitors to the major gateways of the medical center. These new signs pick up the process from there: bringing visitors inside the buildings and to their ultimate destination," says Ken Belcher, vice president for Ancillary Services.

The new color coding and Spanish and Haitian Creole translations on the signs make following directions from one building to another a much easier prospect for those visitors with language barriers or difficulty reading.

"We've taken a long look at the way people move through our campus," says Belcher "Our external signs direct visitors to specific buildings. These new signs bring them to adjoining buildings and elevators, where they can ultimately reach their destination. With this new system in place, anyone should be able to find their desired location if given the correct building name and floor."

In addition to installing the signs, steps have been to simplify the internal direction-giving process. The names of the Robinson (B), Collamore (C) and Old Evans (D) buildings have been combined and all will now use the name Robinson. Since there were no clear architectural delineations between the three buildings, this consolidation was a logical move to cut down on the confusion surrounding the end of one building and the beginning of another. Additionally, the H Building has been incorporated into the Newton Pavilion, again, lessening confusion and eliminating another destination name. The room numbers in these buildings will eventually be changed to eliminate duplication and reflect the fact that they are all within one larger building.

Suffixes of all building names are omitted on the signs. For example, Vose Hall is referred to as Vose, the Newton Pavilion is referred to as Newton, etc.

According to Belcher, the new system and building names need to be incorporated into employees' daily work routines if the system is to be successful. "The effectiveness of this way-finding program is going to be built on how consistent direction-givers are with the new names and rationale. We've been working hard for the past year to incorporate the names Newton and Harrison Pavilions into the everyday language of BMC, and that work has paid off."

Employees are encouraged to become familiar with the language and style used on the signs, as well as their locations, in order to utilize them most effectively when giving directions.

To complement the new signs, directories for building entrances and elevators will be installed and new campus maps, using the new navigating systems, will be printed soon.

Please note the following building name changes:

Old Building Names		New Building Names
Robinson Collamore Old Evans	⇒	Robinson
H Newton Pavilion	⇒	Newton Pavilion